

About this Publication

The People of New South Wales is a major compilation of statistics on birthplace, language, religion and ancestry from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. It is modelled on previous publications by the former New South Wales Ethnic Affairs Commission that were based on the 1996 and 1991 Census.

This publication has gone to considerable lengths to create a data source which is unique, accurate, detailed and comprehensive. Some of the features of this publication include:

- Customised local area tables. *The People of New South Wales* presents ranked lists of birthplace and religion for each Local Government Area (LGA) in New South Wales, along with age profiles of selected birthplace and language groups and details on ancestry and birthplace of parents for the larger LGAs. This gives a very complete picture of the diversity of each area.
- Age-gender profiles for the top 30 birthplace, language and ancestry groups in New South Wales showing the diverse structure of our population.
- Detailed ancestry data by birthplace of parents, giving a clearer picture of the extent of our migrant communities.
- English language competency by age, presenting the differing levels of English language competency amongst different language and age groups.

How to use this Publication

This publication is presented in two volumes. Volume 1 is in three sections, covering the three broad geographical areas around which the data is arranged:

- Section 1 – Australian overview
- Section 2 – New South Wales overview
- Section 3 – Sydney Statistical Division by LGA

Volume 2 contains a series of 2 and 4 page profiles for the LGAs in the rest of New South Wales as well as a 4 page profile of the State for comparison:

- Section 1 – New South Wales 4 page profile
- Section 2 – Hunter Statistical Division by LGA
- Section 3 – Illawarra Statistical Division by LGA
- Section 4 – Rest of New South Wales by LGA

The first two sections of Volume 1 contain the most detailed data. They present a series of tables and graphics including:

- A full listing of birthplace, language, religion and ancestry data from the 2001 Census with comparisons to 1996 where appropriate.
- Graphics on the residential patterns of the major birthplace groups.

- Special cross-tabulations of language with birthplace, religion with birthplace and ancestry with birthplace of parents which reveal richer information on the make-up of the ethnic and religious communities in the State.
- Data on English language proficiency by age.
- Age-sex pyramid charts on major birthplace, language and ancestry groups.

Section 3 comprises a series of 4 page profiles containing statistics on birthplace, language, religion and ancestry for each LGA in the Sydney region. These profiles can be used to compare different areas in NSW – for example what LGA has the highest proportion of overseas born. They can also be compared against the 4 page profile for NSW at the end of section 2 – for example whether the proportion of Italian speakers for a given area is above or below the NSW average.

The second volume of this publication contains a series of 2 and 4 page profiles for each of the remaining LGAs in NSW. The 2 page profiles includes data on the birthplace, ancestry and religion composition of each LGA.

Notes on the Data

The figures in this publication are based on data from the 2001 and 1996 Census of Population and Housing conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Data from the 1991 Census has also been used for the first 2 tables of Section 2. Unless otherwise stated the data is for areas in or for all of New South Wales.

The Census enumerates people where they were located on Census Night. Most standard products from the Census provide characteristics of people on this place of enumeration basis. In contrast to this, all of the data presented in this publication is derived from a series of special cross-tabulations from the ABS based on usual resident counts. Usual residence data are Census counts based on where people usually lived at the time of the Census.

The birthplace, language, religion and ancestry categories available from the 2001 output are the starting point for all tables and graphics. Comparison data from 1996 has been presented when possible.

Geography

In the four-page profiles presented for New South Wales, the geographic level used is Local Government Area (LGA). These areas are directly comparable to the 1996 Census data. Where amalgamations have occurred (e.g. Concord and Drummoyne amalgamated as Canada Bay) the amalgamated data has been presented.

Introduced Random Error

Data released by the ABS at any geographic level (e.g. state, local government area, etc) is subject to randomisation of small cells to maintain confidentiality of respondents. Any over-count or under-count is not significant in percentage terms. The following selected text is taken from the ABS 2001 Census Dictionary:

Under the Census and Statistics Act 1905, it is an offence to release any information collected under the Act that would enable identification of any particular individual or organisation. Introduced random error is used to ensure that no data are released which could risk the identification of individuals in the statistics.

Many classifications used in ABS statistics have an uneven distribution of data throughout their categories. For example, the number of people who are Anglican or born in Italy is quite large (3,903,324 and 238,246 respectively in 1996), while the number of people who are Buddhist or born in Chile (199,812 and 28,820 respectively in 1996) is relatively small. When religion is cross-classified with country of birth, the number in the table cell who are Anglican and who were born in Italy could be small, and the number of Buddhists born in Chile even smaller. These small numbers increase the risk of identifying individuals in the statistics.

Even when variables are more evenly distributed in the classifications, the problem still occurs. The more detailed the classifications, and the more of them that are applied in constructing a table, the greater the incidence of very small cells.

Care is taken in the specification of tables to minimise the risk of identifying individuals. In addition, a technique has been developed to randomly adjust cell values. Random adjustment of the data is considered to be the most satisfactory technique for avoiding the release of identifiable census data. When the technique is applied, cells with very small values are slightly adjusted to prevent any identifiable data being exposed. These adjustments result in small introduced random errors. However the information value of the table as a whole is not impaired.

The totals and sub-totals in summary tables are derived after the random adjustment process has been applied, thus they will include random error if there have been any adjustments to the cell components. Although each table of this kind is internally consistent, comparisons between tables which contain similar data may show some minor discrepancies. In addition the tables at different geographic levels are adjusted independently and tables at the higher geographic level may not be equal to the sum of the tables for the component geographic units.

It is not possible to determine which individual figures have been affected by random error adjustments, but the small variance which may be associated with derived totals can, for the most part, be ignored.

No reliance should be placed on small cells. Even without random error, firm reliance should not be placed on small cells since possible respondent and processing errors have greatest relative impact on small cells.

Some small cells have been randomly altered to zero. Caution should be exercised in deducing that there are no people or households in an area having particular characteristics.

(Source: ABS 2001 Census Dictionary Cat 2901.0, pp218-219)

The effect of this randomisation is that there are small discrepancies in totals throughout the publication. For example, the total number of Australian born people in New South Wales in table 2.3 is slightly different to the total Australian born shown in table 2.5. This is because table 2.5 is derived from a different table which crosstabulates birthplace by birthplace of parents, each cell of which is subject to different levels of introduced random error.

In addition to the randomisation of the source data used in this publication, most tables suppress any values less than 10. This is presented in the tables as “..”. However the totals presented for each table are derived from the actual total of the source data.

Birthplace data

In 2001 the ABS coded the response to the birthplace question into 284 categories, these are based on the Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC). This compares to 276 categories in 1996.

Apart from the addition of birthplace of East Timor, the major differences between the 1996 and 2001 categories are:

- The 1996 categories of *Former Yugoslavia, n.f.d.* and *Former Yugoslav Republics of Serbia and Montenegro* are not used in 2001. A new category of *Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* was used for the 2001 Census.
- The 1996 category of *Former Czechoslovakia, n.f.d.* is not used in 2001. The category of *Eastern Europe, n.f.d.* in 2001 would contain part of what was formerly categorised to *Former Czechoslovakia, n.f.d.*
- A number of residual birthplace categories, such as *Southern and East Africa, n.e.c.*, *Americas, n.f.d.* and *Southern Asia, n.f.d.* were added to the 2001 birthplace categories.

Where it was not possible to present comparable 1996 data the abbreviation *n.c.* (not comparable) is used. For this reason the residual (“Other”) category is not comparable to 1996.

Language data

In both the 2001 and 1996 Census there are 240 language categories based on the Australian Standard Classification of Languages (ASCL).

Following the convention used by the ABS in its standard table outputs for the 2001 Census, all language tables in this publication (including those that use 1996 Census data) count all persons, not just persons aged 5 or more as was customary previously.

Religion data

In 1996 there were 124 religion categories. In 2001 an additional category was added (Other Christian, n.f.d.). Religions presented in this publication are based on the Australian Standard Classification of Religious Groups (ASCRG).

As part of the 4 page profiles, there is a table of selected religions for each LGA. This is basically a table of the most common religions for the LGA except that Sikhism is always included even if it is not one of the most common religions.

Ancestry

Ancestry was first included as a question in the 1986 Census. The aim of the question was to measure the ethnic composition of the population as a whole. Ancestry was not included in either the 1991 or 1996 Censuses.

For the 2001 Census respondents were asked to mark the ancestries they most closely identified with and to consider their ancestry back as far as three generations. Respondents had the option of reporting more than one ancestry but only the first two ancestries they reported were coded for the Census. For example:

- One ancestry reported: where a person's ancestry on their mother's side is English and their ancestry on their father's side is also English they would state one ancestry i.e. English.
- Two ancestries reported: where a person's ancestry on their mother's side is English and their ancestry on their father's side is Italian they would state two ancestries i.e. English and Italian. Both responses would be processed for output purposes.
- Three ancestries reported: where a person's ancestry on their mother's side is English and Italian and their ancestry on their father's side is German they may state three ancestries i.e. English, Italian and German. The first two responses on the Census questionnaire would be processed for output purposes. The tick boxes for English and Italian are before the tick box for Germany, so in this case the ancestries of English and Italian would be processed for output purposes.

The order in which ancestries are listed with tick boxes in the Census questionnaire is

1. English
2. Irish
3. Italian
4. German
5. Greek
6. Chinese
7. Australian
8. Other - please specify

All responses were coded to classifications based on the Australian Standard Classification of Cultural and Ethnic Groups (ASCCEG).

All ancestry data presented in this publication is based on a count of all responses, therefore double counting can occur. Where appropriate the proportion of responses as well as the proportion of all persons in an area is presented along with the counts.